

sairad

reuter tokyo

lunch one (norcap/just)

vam leo, november 27-

two peasant families from this tiny ~~xxxxzz~~ hamlet twelve miles northeast of bac lieu in the mekong delta catered lunch for a company of vietnamese infantry on a search anddestroy mission through their ricefields today. the lunch was free, and taken al fresco rpt al fresco as the peasants looked on.

no payment was asked for and none was given. the company, on its twentyeighth mission in twentyeight days, rode in fifteen armored personnel carriers to the edge of this tiny patch of ground

no payment was asked for and none was given. one element of the company, on its twentyeighth mission in twentyeight days, rode in six armored personnel carriers to the edge of the tiny patch of ground and then helped themselves to food, crockery and utensils.

took,
they ~~zzugzzz~~ and ate, chickens, ducks, rice, eggs, greens, coconuts, peanuts, bread, and crayfish and bar rpt bar from the ponds, then took firewood to heat the lunch, chopsticks to eat it, and left. what chickens they did not eat, they carried away.

this was a unit of the second battalion, ninth
vietnamese 21st
more reuter
regiment of the ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxzzzz~~ division, the division whose headquarters is at bac lieu izz and which is considered the finest division in the vietnamese army.

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lunch two vam leo (norcap)

the division commander, brigadier general nguyen van minh, is understood to have issued orders that his men are to pay for what they take from the land. last night, ~~zt~~ in an informal conversation at a party in the american compound in bac lieu, he said he believed his orders were being carried out.

the question of the behavior of the vietnamese army is critical now, for ARVN is being assigned an increased role in pacification, in support of what officials here and in washington call revolutionary development.

ever since the vietcong insurgency began, the most critical observers here have held that one of the primary troubles with government faced was that the peasantry were more frightened of ~~the~~ government troops than of the viet cong.

many commanders, moralists among the critics said ~~xxxxxxkxxxxxx~~ and thus their men, regarded ~~the~~ service in the ARVN as little more than a license to steal. realists put it somewhat more charitably: that in a run-down country at war, some pilferage from the countryside was inevitable.

but in either case, observers said, the relaxed attitude of the ARVN would have to be changed if "the hearts and the minds of the people" were to be won to the side of the government. in saigon and elsewhere, the 21st division has been cited as one ARVN division which knew its job.

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lunch ~~zzz~~ three (norcap/just)

in saigon and elsewhere, the 21st division, whose commander is one of the most aggressive and well-respected in the country, has been cited as the one ARVN division which knew its job - despite the fact that the men were paid the same (about 4,000 piatres a month, plus benefits) as ~~zzhzz~~ soldiers from other divisions, and received the same food allowance (none).

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lunch three vam leo (norcap)

the mission today began at five in the cool humidity of a five ayem at bac lieu. the personnel carriers moved out from the airfield, collecting infantrymen along the way from their houses, as a school bus collects children.

the men were neatly turned out. they handled weapons carefully, and for the five three or four hours there was nothing untoward. the lumbering APCs moved through rice fields and up to tree lines. the men would dismount, look in huts, search for foxholes or weapons.

at one treeline, fresh foxholes were found as well as a place where someone - presumably a viet cong- had spent the night. the men fired their carbines and the heavy .30 calibre machine guns mounted on the tractors as they assaulted.

no one was there, but the men pointed to a trail which the viet cong had likely taken. but they did not follow it. they pointed at it, and regarded it with interest, returned to the APCs and set out for another tree line.

along the way, as the men stopped in the thatched-roof houses, they began collecting snacks. one house yielded eggs, another some greens. everyone was hungry by the time one group of six APCs, containing perhaps sixty men, stopped outside

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lunch four vam leo (norcap)

there had been no contact all day, but vam leo said was ~~hzzd~~ to be a viet cong village. three or four .30 calibre machine gun rounds were squeezed off pigsty, into the ~~pzzpzzz~~ frightening the pigs and scattering them.

then the men poured out of the tractors and raced toward the houses. one private, a crayfish in one hand and his carbine in the other, lunched after duck in the pond. he dropped the carbine, got the a ~~chicken~~, ~~zhezppz~~ the carbine, got the chicken,

then the men poured out of the tractors and raced toward the houses. one private, a crayfish in one hand and his carbine in the other, lurched after a duck in ^a ~~the~~ pond. he dropped the carbine, got the duck, strangled it, and put in in a burlap sack.

another emerged from a hut his helmet full of eggs. another seized a 20-pound bag of rice. a third was catching chickens, plucking them, and wasging them. a fourth was building the fire.

inside one hut, an old man and his wife wife watched the feast grow. a sergeant was interrogating them as his men ~~zxzxzzz~~ moved in and out of the hut, taking plates and ~~zz~~ chopsticks. the old couple said little, and did not venture out. the ~~zxzxzxz~~ woman, her dark, lined face a mask of impassivity, watched from the door.

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reuter tokyo

lunch five vam leo (norcap)

now it was eleven ayem, and the soldiers sat down to lunch, their rifles askew in the dust, and their helmets off, relaxed. they cooked fish stew and chickens and ducks along with the eggs.

as the men were about half-way through, from the second hut a woman emerged with her two tiny children, one of them naked. she looked about and said a few words to a corporal, who laughed.

then she took hzz the children and went to the pigsty to look at the pigs, who had not been harmed. z she counted the pigs and then trudged off the ^{muddy} twenty yards to the other hut, where the two old people were. she went inside and did not come out again, nor did the z two old people.

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ends reuter

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lunch six van leo (norcap)

^w
noe it was eleven ayem, and the soldiers sat down
to lunch, their rifles askew in the daskz dust, they helmets
off. the booty inside the APCs grew until they resembled
laden with three or four chickens or
noah's arks, each machine ~~with~~ ~~zhikz~~ ~~and~~ ~~zuz~~
ducks, mostly chickens.

as they men were about half-way through, a woman
emerged from the second hut with her two tiny children,
one of them naked. she looked about sourly and said a
few words to a corporal, who laughed.

then she took the children and went to the pigsty
to look at the pigs, ~~zhikz~~
who had not been harmed. she counted
the pigs and then trudged off the twenty muddy yards to
the other hut, where the two old people were. she went
inside and did not come out again, nor did the two old
people, and shortly after noon the soldiers ~~za~~

~~and~~ ~~zuz~~ ~~zuz~~ ~~zuz~~
in the armored personnel carriers ^s went away.

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